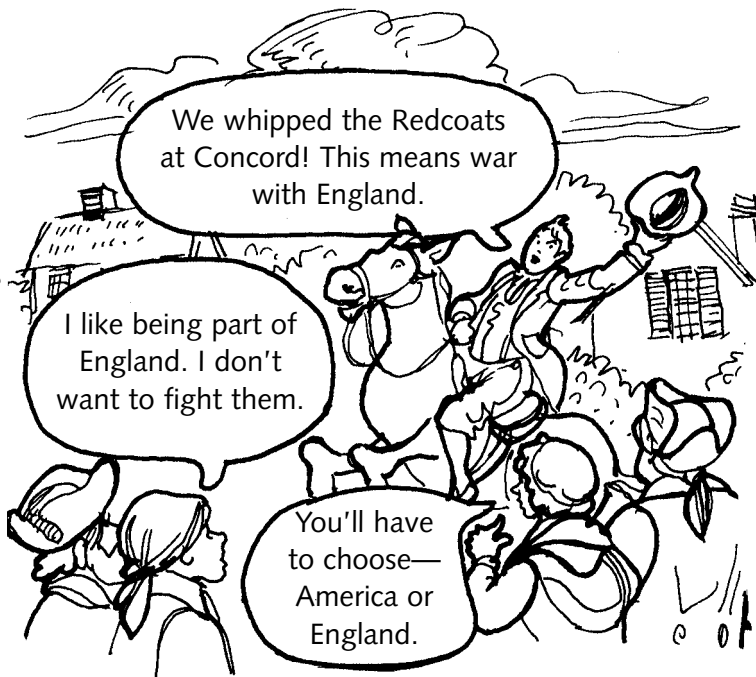
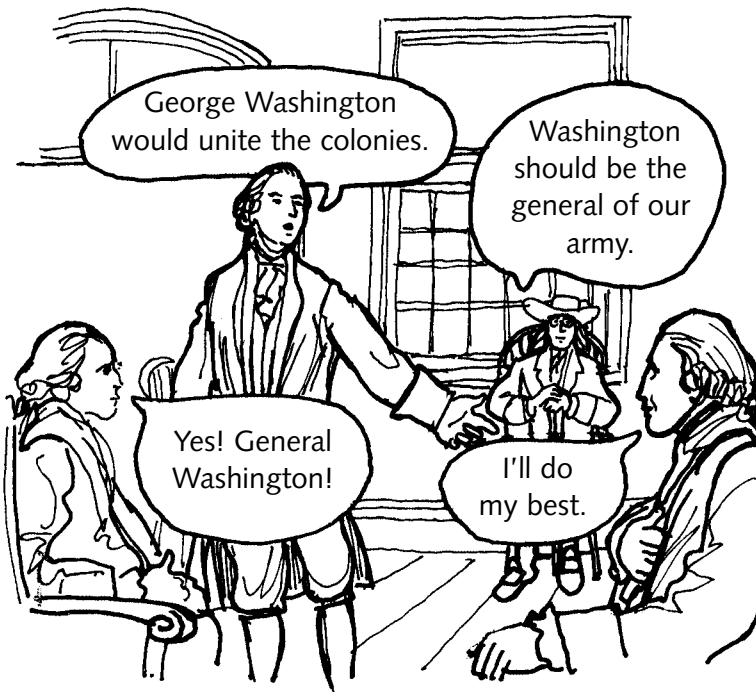


**April 1775:** Riders on horseback race through the 13 colonies. They spread the news about the battles between the British Redcoats and the Minutemen at Lexington and Concord.



**May 1775:** The colonies hold the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. The Congress has to decide what to do next. If there is war with England, the colonies need a stronger army. And someone needs to lead the army.



1

**July 4, 1776:** American leaders sign the Declaration of Independence. The colonies declare themselves "free and independent states."

The Americans are now fighting for complete freedom from England.



3

**June 1775:** Minutemen surround the city of Boston. More than 4,000 British soldiers are still there. British warships sit in the harbor. Fighting breaks out between the two sides at Bunker Hill.



The colonists hold off the British soldiers, but the Redcoats keep coming. Finally, the British capture Bunker Hill. General George Washington comes to Boston to turn the Minutemen into better soldiers.



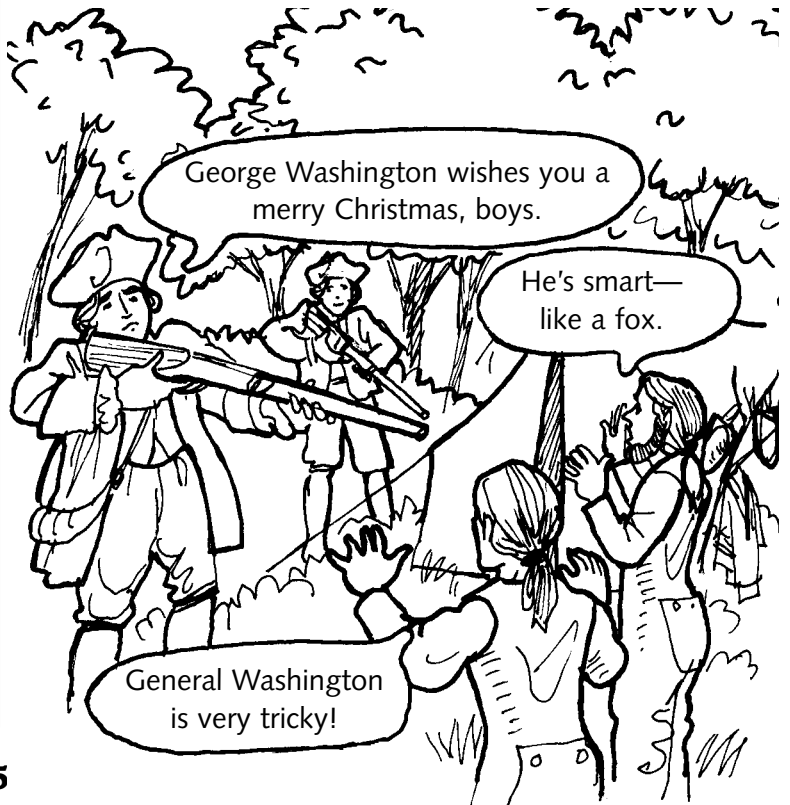
**July 1776:** England sends 32,000 soldiers on 500 ships to Staten Island, New York. George Washington only has 19,000 soldiers in America's new Continental army.



**August 1776:** English and German soldiers trap the American army on Long Island in New York. When fog rolls in, Washington and his men sail to safety.

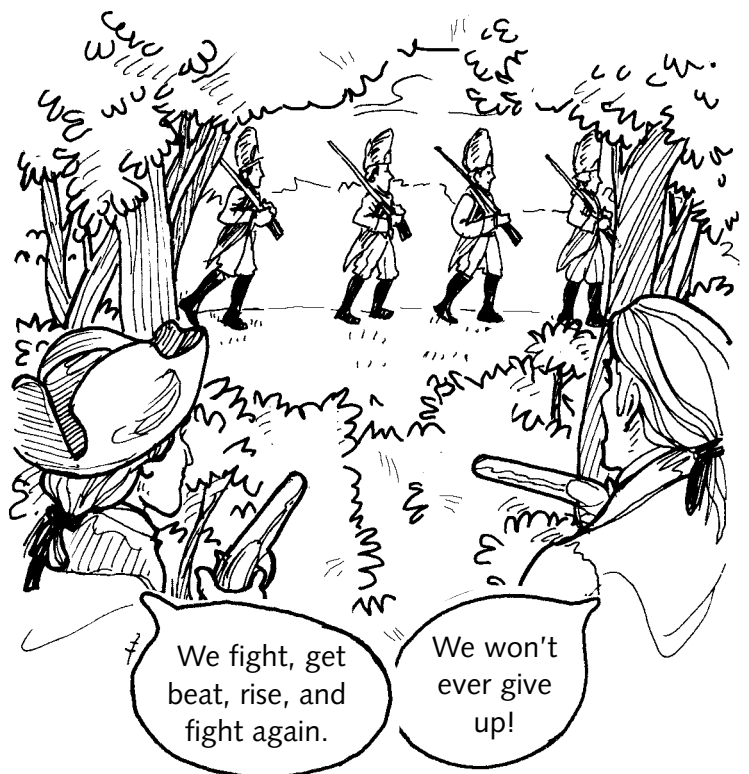


**December 1776:** That winter the British army thinks it has almost beaten the Americans. General Washington surprises them. On Christmas, he and his troops row across the Delaware River from Pennsylvania to New Jersey. They attack and capture almost 1,000 German soldiers.



**1778–1781:** The war drags on. Many English people wonder what England is fighting for. Americans know they're fighting for freedom. And they're fighting on their own soil. England has to send soldiers and supplies thousands of miles across the ocean.

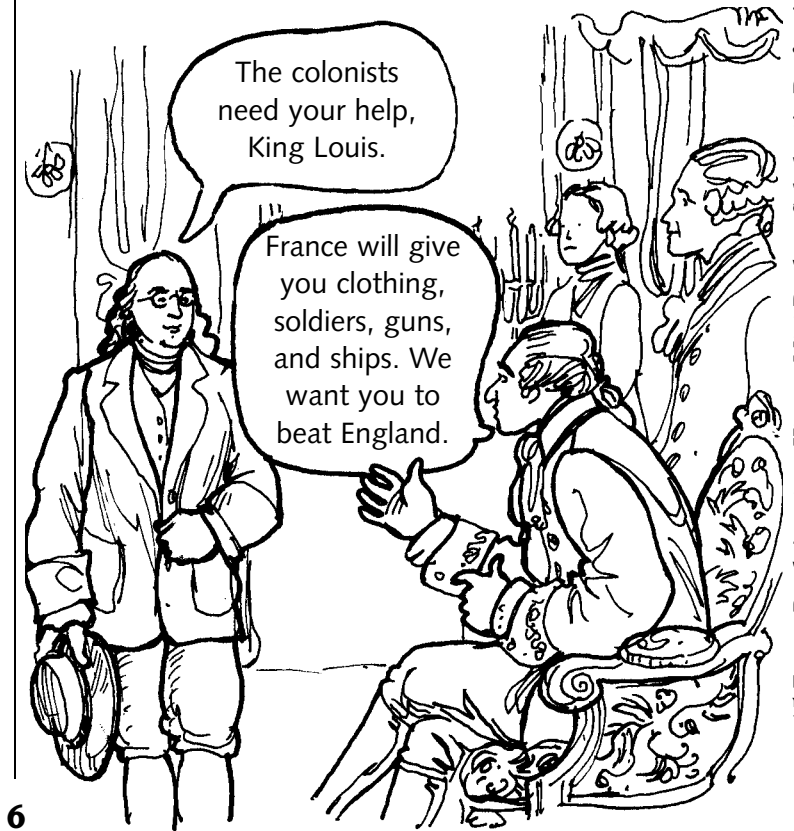
Lord Charles Cornwallis leads British soldiers into the South. The Redcoats win big battles there, but the Americans don't give up.



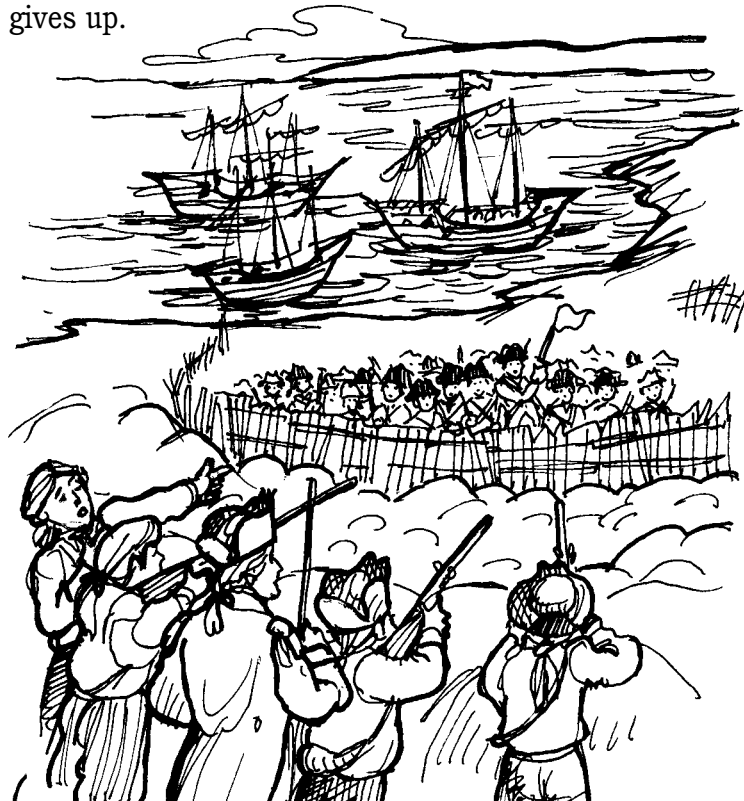
**Winter 1777:** Washington and his men camp at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania. Many men die in the freezing cold. Other soldiers leave because they have completed their army service. General Washington works hard to take care of his troops.



**1778:** Benjamin Franklin goes to Paris, France. He asks the French king to help the Americans.



**October 1781:** Cornwallis and the Redcoats wait in Yorktown, Virginia, for supplies. The French navy blocks the bay. Washington arrives with American and French soldiers and surrounds the British. Cornwallis gives up.



**1783:** America and England sign a peace treaty in Paris, France. England agrees that America is now a free country. The long war is over. Now the United States can grow into a country where people enjoy life, liberty, and happiness.

